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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY.

INFORMATION REPORT

REPORT NO. [REDACTED]

CD NO.

COUNTRY Argentina

SUBJECT Interview with Dr. Ramon Cereiyo, Argentine Minister of Finance

DATE DISTR. 15 August 1951

NO. OF PAGES 2

PLACE ACQUIRED

25X1A

25X1A

DATE OF INFO.

REFERENCE COPY

DO NOT CIRCULATE

NO. OF ENCLS. (LISTED BELOW)

SUPPLEMENT TO REPORT NO.

25X1X

1. During July 1951 Dr. Ramon Cereiyo, Argentine Minister of Finance, in a lengthy, unofficial, and "off the record" conversation with a friend, expressed the views presented in the paragraphs below. During this conversation Dr. Cereiyo exhibited an optimistic and confident attitude, which seemed to indicate that he still retains the good will of President Peron and his wife. Cereiyo stated in a blunt manner that he has every reason to believe he will continue in his present position for another six years.
2. When asked if it is true that Argentina has secret agreements or treaties with other Latin American countries, Dr. Cereiyo replied that this is not so. He said that if one examines the treaties and international agreements in effect today, especially those treaties which govern the foreign policies of the participating countries and to some extent their internal policies, one can note that a considerable proportion of the agreements are the result of open international conferences and not the result of secret negotiations between any two countries, and added that even the bilateral treaties of commerce and navigation, or of arbitration, are usually parts of a series of identical treaties negotiated with all interested nations. He further declared that diplomatic representatives of Argentina seldom endeavor to negotiate secret agreements because the world has progressed beyond that stage of international political relations.
3. When asked for his opinion concerning North American-Argentine relations, Dr. Cereiyo stated that it is his belief that those relations will improve in the future, but that the improvement depends more upon the United States than upon Argentina. This view was not elaborated on by Dr. Cereiyo. He continued by saying that relations between the United States and Argentina are of the utmost importance to the rest of Latin America because relations between any two countries, whether friendly or otherwise, are a matter of concern to the remaining countries. The various interests of those countries, such as political, economic, and military matters, are so closely interwoven that a disturbance in relations between any two countries now inevitably reacts upon the interests and relations of other countries. He is of the opinion that relations between the United States and Argentina will improve following the next Argentine presidential election.

OSA		CLASSIFICATION SECRET		Document No. 003	
STATE #EV	X	NAVY #	X	NSRB	
ARMY #	X	AIR #	X	FBI	
DISTRIBUTION				No change in class	
CONFIDENTIAL				Class. changed by: TS 6	
				Auth: RA 78-2	
				Date: 16 Aug 78	
				By: 017	

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4. When questioned concerning his opinion as to a favorable outcome of United States-Argentine commercial relations, Dr. Cereiyo stated that "an agreement will be reached if the United States of America wishes to avoid war with Soviet Russia and if President Peron requires heavy machinery and dollars". He admitted that Argentina is now in dire need of dollars. According to Cereiyo, Argentina intends to continue building up her heavy industry during the next six years. Concerning cattle and agricultural plans, Dr. Cereiyo stated that the Argentine Government is dissatisfied with the progress made thus far and that landowners are not collaborating, nor are the "peones", as he described the farm workers.
5. With reference to Dr. Cereiyo's opinion concerning Argentine-Russian relations, he stated that, although this is out of his department, he believes relations between the two countries will continue along the already established cold, impersonal lines. He personally does not trust Russia and stated that President Peron shares his views on this subject. He added that, although Russia is still a backward country and filled with suspicion, it owes its present strength to the flexibility of the Communist system; that now that Russia is a power in world relations Argentina cannot afford to ignore her. He continued that Russia, with her vast background of Oriental culture combined with the energy and initiative of the Russian people, has come through an era in which the centralization of authority is an outstanding factor.
6. In answer to a question as to whether he believed Argentina is faced with a financial crisis, Dr. Cereiyo stated he does not think so. He did state that a small crisis might occur in the near future and he has so reported this to the Cabinet. Nevertheless, he stated the Argentine Government is prepared for any financial emergency.
7. When asked to confirm or deny the report that the Oficina de Control del Estado (Office of State Control--OCE), the Banco Central (Central Bank), and the Ministries of Finance and Economy currently are being investigated by government authorities, Dr. Cereiyo stated the report is true but would not elaborate on this point.
8. When asked if he believes that President Peron will actually run for President in the coming elections, he replied that not only will Peron run for President, but that his wife will run for Vice-President. He advised that the Sub-Secretariat has just recently ordered more propaganda for that purpose. When asked for his opinion concerning Peron's chances of winning the elections, he replied, "Well, we're in power".
9. When asked if he believes World War III will start in the near future, Dr. Cereiyo stated that the Cabinet is of that belief. He gave the impression that he is pessimistic concerning the possibility of avoiding another World War. Dr. Cereiyo repeated the well-known Argentine declaration that no Argentine troops will be sent to Korea.

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